

WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION-AN ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS AFFECTING THEIR WORK-LIFE BALANCE

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ABSTRACT

Rapid urbanization and modernization have created rapid changes in the socio-cultural set-up of typical Indian families. Paid occupations are no longer the forte of men only. Increase participation in labour by women are creating a paradigm shift and forcing organizations to revisit their work policies. This has opened new avenues of aspirations and personal growth for working women. There is a sea change in a woman's exposure to educational opportunities than it was decades ago. However, a woman has not been completely relieved of the responsibilities towards children, aging family members and other demands of a household. As a result, working women feel over worked most of the time resulting in poor Work-Life Balance (WLB). Besides being a challenging issue for leaders, managers and policy makers; WLB has also attracted researchers. The demands of a woman's life are often multi-faceted. WLB primarily examines her ability to 'fit' between the multiple roles she keeps playing. In the light of this, the study aims at analysing the WLB of working women working in higher education institutes of J&K.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance (WLB), Urbanization, Modernization, Paradigm Shift

INTRODUCTION:

Both men and women should get the same opportunities to shape their lives and influence the society they live in. Modern Indian women get more educational opportunities compared to their counter-parts decades ago. This is particularly true of urban women. Besides aspiring for personal growth, economic pressure to be independent has also influenced her decision to work. Paid occupations nowadays are full of a considerable number of women belonging to almost all classes. Many women believe that joining the work force and being independent can help them realize their innate talents and skills in their areas of interest.

Given the patriarchal makeup of the society we live in, women are still considered the primary bearers of household responsibilities and other dependent care needs. Working as well as managing home often creates a clash between her work and life roles. Therefore, helping strike a balance between work and non-work life of women professionals should be a vital goal for sustained development of any organization. Factually, women have been more participative workers in service sector compared to other sectors. In this regard, it becomes

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all the more important for educational institutions to take all the necessary steps to assist women in maintaining a healthy WLB. This is beneficial for both women employees and the organizations they work for.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The concept of Work-Life Balance is quite intriguing and can be viewed from the perspectives of 'work', 'life' and 'balance' (Deery, 2008). Work-Life Balance can be defined as the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in and equally satisfied with his/her work and family role (Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw, 2003). Dundas (2018) says that WLB is simply about how effectively one can juggle between paid work and all other activities that are important such as family, leisure, entertainment etc.

Historically, women in India were mainly employed in non-managerial, sub-ordinate and other such low-profile positions. However, things have changed and women are seen occupying almost all categories of positions in the workplace. Yet, this change has added to a woman's duties and responsibilities towards family and society (Mathew and Panchanatham, 2009). She finds herself wavering between the competing demands of work and family. WLB has important consequences for an employee's attitude towards his/her life and towards the organizations he/she works for (Scholaris and Marks, 2017). Guest (2002) thinks that it is possible to examine the trend of WLB and its parameters that influence the well-being and job outcomes of employees at work. Therefore, the issues relating to how one can maintain and achieve WLB have received a lot of attention (Deery, 2008). Though, much investigation has not happened in the education sector w.r.t WLB (Doherty and Manfredi, 2016; Mohd Noor, Stanton and Young, 2018; Mohd Noor and Amat, 2010).

Higher education is believed to be quite accommodative to the needs of combining career and family positively. However, Waters and Bardoel (2006) found that academic staff reported feeling highly stressed due to high teaching load, increasing staff/student ratio, lack of recognition and pressure to attract funds. It is quite likely that this stress can in turn affect certain occupation attitudes like job satisfaction, job involvement and intention to stay.

Increase employee attrition has bad repercussions for any job sector and higher education is no exception. In the race to cope up with other institutions adopting market-driven principles, staff often finds itself battling elevated workloads, increased tasks and pressures concerning quality research.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

It has now become imperative for organizations to embrace WLB practices especially in wake of global competition and increased pressure on organizations to be flexible and responsive to change. Employee who is not struggling with the issue to balancing work and life can contribute more to work. Sustainance of all modern organizations is pivoted to the fact that a workable and practical WLB policy needs to be made and implemented for the benefit of employees as well as employers. Organizations who don't comply are exposing themselves to numerous problems in form of dissatisfied and unproductive workers with

increased turnover. In this view, research has been taken up to investigate this crucial aspect of WLB in higher education sector of J&K.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY to examine the factors affecting WLB of women employee’s working in higher education sector;

- to analyse the effect of work interference with personal life and other factors affecting WLB;
- to investigate the demographic profile of respondents; and
- to put forth conclusions in the light of findings arrived at.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data was collected from primary as well as secondary sources. A well-designed structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. Secondary data was sought from various books, journals, periodicals, websites etc. Sampling technique used is Convenience Sampling and the sample size of 100 is taken.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 depicts that 48% of the respondents belong to the age group 46-55 years, and 47% are having professional qualification. 64% are married. 48% are Associate Professors. 32% draw a salary of Rs 60,000 and above. Nearly 38% of women are working in urban areas and 41% of the respondents are having the periodicity of 5 years and above in the current position. 28% of the respondents are having more than 20 years of total experience in their fields.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

N		%	N		%
Age			Marital Status		
Below 35 years	32	32	Married	64	64
36-45 years	20	20	Single	36	36
46-55 years	48	48	Current Position in the Organization		
Academic Qualification			Professor	13	13
Professional	47	47	Associate Professor	48	48
Postgraduate	21	21	Assistant Professor	24	24
Graduate	16	16	Others	15	15
Others	16	16	Salary Drawn		
Location of Working Institute			Less than 40,000	17	17
Rural	19	25	41,000-50,000	26	26
Semi-Urban	26	32	51,000 – 60,000	25	25
Urban	38	47	Above 60,000	32	32

Periodicity of Current Position			Total Work Experience		
Less than a year	18	18	Below 5 years	11	11
1-2 years	24	24	5-10 years	17	17
3-4 years	17	17	11-15 years	14	14
5 years and above	41	41	16-20 years	30	30
			Above 20 years	28	28

Table 2 presents one-way ANOVA for Work Interference with Personal Life against Age. It is clear that most of the variable of work interference with personal life when compared with age are significant at 0.05 levels. The calculated value of F is less than the table value for variables expect for the variable: I struggle to juggle work and life fronts. This variable is not a significant variable.

Table 2: One Way ANOVA for Work Interference with Personal Life against Age

Work Interference with Personal Life against Age	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
My personal life suffers because of my work	10.610	3	3.453	2.319	0.050*
I neglect personal needs because of work	31.655	3	10.255	8.260	0.001*
I struggle to juggle work and life fronts	2.045	3	0.748	1.280	0.263
My job makes my personal life difficult	12.773	3	4.642	2.597	0.064*
I put my personal life on hold for work	15.267	3	5.452	2.797	0.023*
I am happy with the amount of time I have for non-work activities	10.074	3	3.094	2.654	0.007*

*Significant at the 0.05 level. Dependent variable: Age

Table 3 presents one-way ANOVA for Work Interference with Personal Life against Total Work Experience. It is clear from the table that most of the variables of work interference with personal life against total work experience are significant at 0.05 levels. The calculated value of F is less than the table value for most of the variables. Rest of the variables are not significant.

Table 3: One Way ANOVA for Work Interference with Personal Life against Total Work Experience

Work Interference with Personal Life against Total Work Experience	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
My personal life suffers because of my work	6.492	3	2.890	1.477	0.461
I neglect personal needs because of work	20.942	3	6.057	4.246	0.006*
I struggle to juggle work and life fronts	6.561	3	2.550	2.487	0.044*
My job makes my personal life difficult	9.522	3	3.770	1.469	0.621
I put my personal life on hold for work	4.744	3	1.284	0.208	0.795
I am happy with the amount of time I have for non-work activities	8.894	3	2.338	1.105	0.091*

*Significant at the 0.05 level. Dependent variable: Total Work Experience

Table 4 shows the Mean, S.D and correlation matrix of the variables of Work Interference with Personal Life. The mean scores computed are based on the weighted average method. Among all variables: ‘My personal life suffers because of work’ has got the highest mean value of 4.34 and S.D of 1.111. Many respondents feel that they miss on their personal life because of their work schedule. A significant and strong correlation was found for: ‘I neglect personal needs because of work’ ($r=.287$, $p<0.01$ level). Another variable: ‘I put my personal life on hold for work’ shows a significant correlation ($r=.272$, $p<0.05$ level). This shows most of the respondents are not satisfied with their WLB.

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Matrix of Variables of Work Interference with Personal Life

S.No.	Variable		Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	My personal life suffers because of my work	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	4.34	1.111	1					
2	I neglect personal needs because of work	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	3.58	1.472	.278(**)	1				
3	I struggle to juggle work and life fronts	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	3.83	1.682	.171	.102	1			
4	My job makes my personal life difficult	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	3.16	1.366	-.088	-.271	.238(*)	1		
5	I put my personal life on hold for work	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	3.15	.688	-.097	.074	.272(*)	.120	1	
6	I am happy with the amount of time I have for non-work activities	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	3.99	.945	.058	.059	.187	-.194	.067	1

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)

Table 5 shows one-way ANOVA for Factors Impacting WLB against Age. It is clear that most of the variables of Factors Impacting WLB against age are significant at 0.05 levels. The calculated value of F is less than the table value for most of the variables. Rest of the variables are not significant.

Table 5: One-way ANOVA for Factors Impacting Work-Life Balance against Age

Factors Impacting Work-Life Balance against Age	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I feel exhausted at the end of the day	11.631	3	3.217	3.460	0.034*
My family supports me in my professional life	28.847	3	9.385	6.918	0.003*
My organization recognizes the importance of my personal life	30.200	3	10.760	3.967	0.015*
Lack of WLB has an adverse effect on my career	12.476	3	4.152	2.673	0.875
My colleagues have resigned or taken a career break because of WLB issues in the last one year	3.339	3	1.113	1.442	0.245

*Significant at the 0.05 level. Dependent variable: Age

Table 6 shows one-way ANOVA for Factors Impacting WLB against Total Work Experience. It is clear that most of the variables of Factors Impacting WLB against Total Work Experience are significant at 0.05 levels. The calculated value of F is less than the table value for most of the variables. Rest of the variables are not significant.

Table 6: One Way ANOVA for Factors Impacting WLB against Total Work Experience

Work Interference with Personal Life against Age	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I feel exhausted at the end of the day	2.455	3	0.815	0.634	0.950
My family supports me in my professional life	39.884	3	13.382	10.845	0.001*
My organization recognizes the importance of my personal life	29.976	3	9.398	3.596	0.014*
Lack of WLB has an adverse effect on my career	21.722	3	7.670	4.712	0.004*
My colleagues have resigned or taken a career break because of WLB issues in the last one year	5.593	3	1.789	1.599	0.211

*Significant at the 0.05 level. Dependent variable: Total Work Experience

Table 7 shows the Mean, S.D and correlation matrix of the variables of Factors Impacting WLB. The mean scores computed are based on the weighted average method. Among all variables: 'Lack of WLB has an adverse effect on my career' has got the highest mean value of 3.83 and S.D of 1.327. Many respondents feel that their career is affected due to poor WLB. A significant and strong correlation was found for this variable ($r = .121$, $p < 0.05$ level)

Table 7: Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Matrix of Variables of Factors Impacting Work-Life Balance

S.No.	Variable		Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5
1	I feel exhausted at the end of the day	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	3.04	1.134	1				
2	My family supports me in my professional life	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	3.44	1.301	.150	1			
3	My organization recognizes the importance of my personal life	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	3.13	1.817	-.025	.141	1		
4	Lack of WLB has an adverse effect on my career	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	3.83	1.327	-.018	.267(*)	.121	1	
5	My colleagues have resigned or taken a career break because of WLB issues in the last one year	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2 tailed) N	3.45	0.976	-.026	-.044	.021	.166	1

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Respondents are of the opinion that work makes their personal life suffer. Most of them feel that they neglect their personal life because of job.
- Many respondents revealed that their family as well as organizations they work for are supportive. They even recognize the importance of their personal life.
- Respondents seem happier with the amount of time they spend on non-work activities.
- Most women employees feel exhausted at the end of the day. They even feel that poor WLB or lack of it has an adverse effect on their career.
- Many women find themselves struggling to juggle between work and non-work activities.
- Women very often have to put their personal lives on hold to fulfil various job commitments.

- Many women are alarmed by the fact that their colleagues resign or take career breaks due to WLB issues.

CONCLUSION

Service sector can pride itself in being one of the fastest growing sectors in the economy. It also provides employment opportunities to a number of women. Therefore, a lot of onus lies on the policy makers to design WLB policies suited to work and family structure of employees as well as the financial position of the organization they work for. It must be understood that professional and personal life are the two sides of the same coin. If one tries to thoughtlessly separate the two, only clashes and conflicts will arise. So, it becomes necessary for organizations to develop a special bond with its employees so that they put their heart and soul into work.

Achieving the desired equilibrium between work and life is not as simple as it sounds especially for women. However, the attainment of this equilibrium can be facilitated by organizational efforts coupled with family support. Organizations need to create a congenial atmosphere for women employees. At the same time positive efforts from the family are also needed. It is strongly reiterated that a healthy balance between professional and personal life is the key to success.

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